



By the King.

A Proclamation for the better incouragement and  
aduancement of the Trade of the East-  
Indye Company.



THE Kings most Excellent Maiestie, graciously taking into His Princely consideration the great honour His Maiestie and His Royall Progenitours and this whole Kingdome haue for diuers years receiued by the erection of the Company of Merchants of London, trading into the East Indies, being incorporated by His deare Sister the late Queene Elizabeth, and the said incorporation confirmed by His late deare father King James of famous memory, whereby the native Commodities of this Kingdome are exported, and trade and commerce maintained with the remotest Estates and Countries, the Kingdome furnished with rich and necessary commodities at cheaper prizes then in former times, His Maiesties reuennue increased in his customes and Subsidies, the number of great and seruiceable Ships much multiplied, and many of His Maiesties Subjects of all trades set to worke and imployed in manufactures wrought thereof, and a Staple of those Indian commodities settled in this Kingdome, and from hence to the further increase of Trade and imployment of Shipping transported in other forreigne parts: And His Maiesty being now informed, as well by the Gouvernour and others imployed in principall places of trust for the said Company, as by the Farmers of His Maiesties great Customes, That many abuses are lately crept into the said Trade by the practise of Officers, Seruants and others imployed by the said Company and their Confederates, in ayming at their owne profits, by driving a secret vnderhand Trade, whereby the said Companies generall affaires are of late much declined and decayed, and the aduenturers therein much discouraged, and that the same is induced by the said secret and vnderhand Trade aboard the Shippes both outward bound to the East Indies, in the East Indie, and homeward, laden from thence for the said Company in the Narrow Seas and other places vpon the Confines of this Kingdome, either after the said Ships outwards bound are discharged out of the Harbours of this Kingdome, or before the said Shippes homeward bound can come into any Harbour or other place neere any of His Maiesties Custome houses, where the particular goods freighted and laden in the said Shippes may be entred, and the Customes and Duties payed, whereby His Maiesty is defrauded of his Customes and Subsidies, the said Company of their freight and goods, and whereby the said Trade is disparaged and brought to disreputation, and the Aduenturers therein discouraged: All which His Maiesty conceiue to be offences tending to the dishonour of himselfe and this His Kingdome, the diminution of His Reuennue, and to the suerthrow of so famous a Trade and eminent a Company, and to deserue seuerer Censure and exemplary punishment.

And His Maiestie not intending to suffer or passe by such abuses, being of so dangerous consequence, doth hereby straightly charge and command, vpon paine of incurring His Highnesse displeasure, and to be punished as contemners of His Maiesties Royall Proclamation, that no particular man of the said Company nor any of their officers or Seruants, or any other, which now

are, or hereafter shall bee imployed in any of their Shippes, trading into any of the said Easterly parts, or any other person or persons whatsoever, shall from henceforth drive any vnderhand Trade, as aforesaid, either to, in, or from the Indies aforesaid, but such as shall be licensed by the said Company, as by their Acts and Orders in that behalfe grounded vpon their Letters Patents is allowable, and such goods and commodities as shall be so imported, not to bee disposed of vntill the said Company shall haue receiued an accompt and giuen allowance therof, and vntill that their Ships shall haue arrived at, or in the Port of London within this Kingdome; nor that any person or persons whatsoever vpon the paine aforesaid, shall presume to buy, contract, bargain or barter for, or receiue or take any of the goods, wares or Merchandizes, which shall be laden aboard any of the said Ships, so homeward bound, as aforesaid, vntill such Ship or Ships so homeward bound as aforesaid, in, or out of which such goods, wares or Merchandizes shall be so bought, sold, deliuered, contracted or bartred for, be first brought into the said Port of London, and there by the allowance of the said Company be duely entred, and the goods thereout discharged, nor shall giue any assistance, helpe or encouragement for the vnlading of any such goods at any other place, or in any other manner, nor shall otherwise offend in any thing, contrary to the true meaning of these Presents. And his Maiestie being so sensible of the inconueniences that attend vpon the said abuses before mentioned, and intending to haue an absolute reformation thereof, doth therefore hereby straightly charge and command all Admirals, Vice Admirals and other Officers of the Admiralty, and such as haue Admirall Jurisdiction; And all Maiors, Portreiuers, Sheriffes, Bayliffes, Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, and all other his Officers whom it may concerne, that they and euery of them be carefull to preuent the said offences, and to enquire of such as shall offend therein, and to returne their names to the Lords of his Maiesties most Honourable Priny Counsell, and to giue true and timely intelligence thereof to the Governour of the Company for the time being, that such course may be taken for the preuention of such abuses, and for the seuerer punishment of all such, who shall presume to contemne or neglect this Our Royall Commandement, either in the Court of Star-chamber, or otherwise, as shall be thought fit. And if it shall at any time hereafter be discovered and made to appeare, that any of his Maiesties said Officers haue bene Actors in these abuses, or any of them, or haue conniued at the offences of others, or haue bene negligent in the execution of this his Command and Royall Pleasure; his Maiestie doth hereby declare, that he will not onely extend the paine of his heavy displeasure vpon them, and cause them to be punished seuerely, as aforesaid, but will also hold them vnworthy to serue his Maiestie in any of those places of trust concerning his Reuennue.

Giuen at Our Court at Whitehall, the fifteenth day of February, in the third yeere of Our Raigne of Great Brittain, France, and Ireland.

God saue the King.



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